Our three-day program will explore the importance of the spiritual mentor (guru or lama) in Buddhist practice. One is commonly inspired to personally engage in practicing the Buddhist path by meeting someone who embodies its aims and who explains them well. The Ground of All Excellence by the 14th century Tibetan master Tsong-kha-pa, poignantly clarifies the essentials of Buddhist practice in 14 verses that begin and end by praising the role of a spiritual guide, and offer, in between, a coherent and beautiful summary of the entire path: the "three principles" of renunciation, altruistic intention and deep insight. A text will be available at the seminar.

**Friday, October 17, 7:00 - 9:00 PM:**
Babbott Room, the Octagon Building, Amherst College

Panel: The relationship between guru and practitioner in Tibetan Buddhism
Geshe Ngawang Singye, Director, Jampel Nyingpo Ling, Amherst, MA, will join Khen Rinpoche and Prof. Gardiner in a panel discussion moderated by Maria Heim, Professor of Religion, Amherst College, with opportunity for audience Q & A.

**Saturday, October 18**
Franklin Patterson Hall, Room 108

11 AM -1:00 PM: Introduction and Verses 1-4 of “Ground of All Excellence” -- The Gurn, The Precious Human Life and Commitment to Practice. Buddhists call “the precious human life” one that possesses both external and internal freedoms from unfavorable conditions, and availability of and access to helpful spiritual teachings. The tradition strongly encourages gratitude for, and commitment to making the most of, these fortunes.

2:30-4:30 PM Verses 5-9 -- Renunciation, Bodhimind and Wisdom. Successful spiritual growth requires giving up some non-productive habits (renunciation), developing a penetrating insight into the ultimate nature of things (wisdom) and taking up an energetic attitude to devote oneself to self-cultivation for the benefit of all beings (bodhimind).

**Sunday, October 19, 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM**
Franklin Patterson Hall, Room 108

Verses 10-14 -- Foundations for Tantra and Remembering the Guru/Lama/Teacher. The Tantric Buddhist path (aka Vajrayana) is seen as the finest culmination of the Tibetan Buddhist path because its powerful visualization practices most fully harness deep energies of body, speech and mind. Engaging these practices while recognizing the great kindnesses of one’s guru-mentor is seen as the most fruitful method for personal transformation. Khen Rinpoche will conclude the seminar with a visualization blessing of Tara, Goddess of Liberation.

Open to the public, with a per-session suggested donation of:
General public $20  ❖ Seniors $10  ❖ Tibetan Community $5  ❖ Five College students Free

For more information, call 413-531-6677 or email “jampelnyingpoling@gmail.com”

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